

**COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES**  
**June 13, 2006**

The meeting of the Maryland Commission on Human Relations was called to order on Tuesday, June 13, 2006 at 10:15 a.m., in Baltimore, Maryland.

<b>Present</b>	Thomas Owen, Barbara Dezmon, JoAnn Fisher, Norman Gelman and John Hermina.
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<b>APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES</b>	The minutes of the May Commission meeting were accepted as written.
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<b>CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT</b>	Commissioners received copies of the Chairperson's Report (See attached).
Commissioner Attendance	Chairperson Owen informed Commissioners that there are some excused absences today. Rabbi Adler sent Chairperson Owen a letter sometime back that he had some prior commitments before being appointed to the Commission that will cause him to be absent in June, July and August. Commissioner Banik also informed Chairperson Owen that he has some assignments in Washington, D. C. that will prevent his attendance this month and the July meeting. Commissioner Allen also called to say he is on vacation.

Commissioner Gelman informed Commissioners that he was unable to attend last month's meeting due to his wife's illness and being stranded in California.

Vice-Chairperson Hermina informed Commissioners that he is a member of the bar in Pennsylvania and New York. As a member of the bar in the two states mentioned, Vice-Chairperson Hermina had to attend Continuing Legal Education hours to maintain his accreditation.

Montgomery County Human Relations Commission	Chairperson Owen informed Commissioners that he attended and spoke during the Montgomery County Commission meeting last month. Commissioner Banik invited Chairperson Owen during last month's meeting. Chairperson Owen also stated that this is a very active and enthusiastic commission.
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Commissioner Dezmon's  
Resignation

Commissioner Dezmon informed Commissioners that this will be the last meeting that she attends and will be retiring later this year. She also stated that she has mailed a letter of resignation to the Governor's office, to the Chairperson and to the agency's Executive Director

Chairperson Owen thanked Commissioner Dezmon and appreciates all her work during her tenure with the Commission.

The Executive Director thanked Commissioner Dezmon for all her hard work during her tenure with the Commission. The Executive Director also wished Commissioner Dezmon well in her retirement.

**EXECUTIVE  
DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Commissioners received copies of the Executive Director's Report (See attached).

Employee Recognition Day

The Executive Director informed Commissioners that the Governor proclaimed May 3, 2006 as Employee Recognition Day. The Executive Director decided to provide MCHR staff with a Continental Breakfast on that day. This was a surprise and was greatly appreciated by MCHR staff.

Harford County Human  
Relations Commission  
Meeting

Chairperson Owen inquired of the Executive Director whether or not he attended the meeting of the Harford County Commission. The Executive Director stated that the meeting was held during the time when he was out of town. The Executive Director informed Commissioners that he talked to Valeria "Ria" Bomani, Chair of the Harford Commission during which the names of the Executive Director of the Baltimore County and Howard County Commissions were given. The Harford County Commission is looking for activities that a volunteer commission, with few resources, could do in the community that would be positive and not just meeting every month. Both Baltimore County and Howard County have numerous community relations type activities that they sponsor throughout the year in their communities. These activities are conducted with little or no money or staff.

Legislative Auditor

The Executive Director informed Commissioners that the legislative audit has been completed. MCHR has not yet received anything in writing. There were no real issues that came up during the audit. MCHR should receive something in writing shortly, stating the findings of the auditors.

**DEPUTY DIRECTOR'S  
REPORT**

Commissioners received copies of the Deputy Director's Report (See attached). The Deputy Director is on vacation. The Executive Director informed Commissioners that MCHR is ahead in completing the EEOC contract by the September deadline. MCHR is a couple of cases behind on the housing contract, but will have no difficulty completing the housing contract.

**ASSISTANT  
DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

Commissioners received copies of the Assistant Director's Report (See attached). Due to the Assistant Director's absence his Administrative Officer informed Commissioners that MCHR is entering into the last month

of this budget year. MCHR does not anticipate any problems closing in the black.

#### Information Technology

The Information Technology Manager informed Commissioners that meetings have been held with vendors to determine whether to purchase laptops or desk top computers, or a combination thereof. MCHR should receive a recommendation from the vendors by next week. MCHR should be able to purchase the computers in August, or no later than September.

### **GENERAL COUNSEL'S REPORT**

Commissioners received copies of the General Counsel's Report (See attached).

#### Civil Rights Bill – Employment Discrimination

The General Counsel informed Commissioners that she met with Delegate Rosenberg along with Deborah Eisenberg, President of the Association of Employment Lawyers. Ideas were discussed regarding coming up with a plan as to what would be the most effective and efficient way of presenting this bill to the General Assembly and getting the bill passed. Delegate Rosenberg would like to identify organizations, groups and persons to work on a task force to help draft legislation. Delegate Rosenberg still wants to put forth this legislation next session.

#### Hate Crimes Summit

The General Counsel attended the Hate Crimes Summit held in Washington, D. C. The General Counsel attended the workshop that dealt with gangs. There were discussions regarding the evidence of gangs throughout Maryland. There is a need to train and educate Police Departments around the state, as to how to address gang violence.

The General Counsel also attended the meeting of the Frederick County Human Rights Commission to discuss proposed revisions to enhance the county's fair housing statute. The General Counsel attended to provide some technical assistance, to discuss the state law, and to discuss what substantial equivalency is required.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

#### Commissioners' Attendance

Chairperson Owen forwarded a letter to all Commissioners regarding attendance at monthly Commission meetings. Chairperson Owen would like to increase attendance and involvement of Commissioners at monthly meetings in any way he can.

Commissioner Gelman stated that the Commission needs to think about ways to expand the kinds of activities that the Commission engages in that would spark the interest to bring Commissioners to the meetings. One new area could be hate crimes in the State of Maryland.

Commissioners suggested and discussed several new ideas regarding projects that the Commission could take on. As a result of that discussion Chairperson Owen suggested a retreat, during the fall, to further discuss these ideas. Commissioner Gelman would like to have the activity mentioned above completed by October, 2006.

Chairperson Owen suggested that the Fall Retreat and Hate Crimes be placed on the agenda for next month's meeting. Commissioners agreed.

Veterans' Event

Commissioner Fisher informed Commissioners that her specialty is training and conducting massive events with no money. Commissioner Fisher discussed an event held during the Memorial Day weekend. This event was held for veterans of Maryland. The town received three citations and awards were given to veterans, etc.

Immigrant Study

Chairperson Owen informed Commissioners that the committee has been able to get some help from outside the Commission for funding the study. The committee is still waiting to get a partnership with the Hispanic Affairs Commission.

Commissioner meeting adjourned at 12:15 p.m.

Barbara Wilson